

REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the Office Action dated October 11, 2005 in which the Examiner rejected claims 2 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

As indicated above, claims 2 and 6 have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment does not narrow the literal scope of the claims. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 2 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claim 1 claims an equipment management system and claim 11 claims an equipment management method for managing equipment by an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from the equipment and a central management apparatus for centrally managing management information making packet data communication via a network over which a data processor is connected. The central management apparatus and method include a transmission controller for transmitting, to the data processor in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus, packet data containing connection check data addressed to a newly installed equipment management apparatus. A reception controller acquires the packet data containing the connection check data transmitted to the apparatus from the data processor before starting equipment management.

Through the structure and method of the claimed invention transmitting, to a data processor in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus, packet data containing connection check data which is addressed to a newly

installed equipment management apparatus, and having the equipment management apparatus acquire the packet data from the data processor, as claimed in claims 1 and 11, the claimed invention provides an equipment management system which can speedily make a connection check when equipment management apparatus is newly installed. The prior art does not show, teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claims 1 and 11.

Claim 14 claims an equipment management method for managing equipment by an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment and a central management apparatus for centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first communication system or a second communication system. The equipment management method comprises the steps of registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed at the central management apparatus; determining whether a communication system between the newly installed equipment management apparatus and the central management apparatus is a first communication system or a second communication system; and in the case where the communication system is the first communication system, the central management apparatus transmitting connection check data addressed to the equipment management apparatus without receiving initial transmission data from the equipment management apparatus to be newly installed, and in the case where the communication system is the second communication system, the central management apparatus transmitting the connection check data addressed to the equipment management apparatus in response to reception of the initial transmission data from the equipment management apparatus to be newly installed.

Through the method of the claimed invention determining whether a communication system is a first or second communication system and communicating connection check data therewith with different methods including transmitting data without receiving initial transmission data when a first communication system is used and by transmitting data in response to reception of initial transmission data when a second communication system is used as claimed in claim 14, the claimed invention provides an equipment management method which can change the method for initial settings in order to speedily connect the device.

The prior art does not show, teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claim 14.

Claims 1-3, 6, 9-13 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Smith et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,785,015) in view of *L'Heureux et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,697,942).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and for reasons which will be set forth below, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims and allows the claims to issue.

Smith et al appears to disclose computer systems having processes or peripheral equipment supported by periodic maintenance or dispatched service, and to methods of maintaining continuous operation of such processes or peripheral equipment, for example, by monitoring status, reporting changes in status, and facilitating reconfiguration. (Col. 1, lines 7-12) A method for monitoring a computer system peripheral, according to various aspects includes sending a first message to the peripheral where the first message includes indicia of a subscription for a status of the peripheral; and receiving a plurality of publications from the peripheral where

each publication includes a respective value of the status. (Col. 2, lines 8-14) By providing email send and receive capability in the peripheral, requests for subscriptions and publications of status reports are communicated in a manner that is efficient in terms of system resources and in terms of interacting with personnel. Mail servers in a network may permit email traffic through fire walls, facilitating access to the peripheral, for example, for monitoring status, for obtaining notice of changes in status, and for reconfiguration all from any station of a network, including a world wide network for email. (Col. 2, lines 40-49) Message I/O 222 distinguishes data intended for printing from other network communication containing commands as described above (e.g., email) and stores the later in message data store 228. Message I/O 222 also reads data from message data store 228 (e.g., formatted as a message containing a reply as discussed above) and accomplishes sending the data via network controller 214 onto intranet 106. Message data store 228 may operate as a buffer, a FIFO, a database, or as a directory of files. Messages in message data store 228 may conform to any conventional format, for example, defined by one of the protocols discussed above. When network communication is accomplished by email, any email format may be used, for example, SNMP, SMTP, MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension), or SMIME (Secure MIME). Mail I/O 230 receives messages containing commands from message data store 228 and stores messages containing replies in message data store 228. Mail I/O 230 performs the functions of a mail server as discussed above for providing access to received messages to any process executed by processor 208. Mail I/O 230 may in addition provide the services of a mail client as discussed above for the preparation of properly formatted email messages from data supplied by other processes executed

by processor 208. Further, Mail I/O 230 may read properly formatted email messages, determine data for one or more processes executed by processor 208 and provide the data in any format suitable for such processes. (Col. 9, line 50 through Col. 10, line 11) A method of operating a system according to various aspects may include any method for maintaining a peripheral or process via network communication with reference to a subscription that is received by the peripheral or by the monitoring processor and thereafter directs publication of reports from time to time while the subscription is active. By including reporting criteria, as discussed above, in the network communication, the effect on network utilization of monitoring and maintaining several peripherals may be managed to avoid excessive network traffic. For example, method 510 of FIG. 5 as performed by a user or other process from one or more workstations accomplishes maintaining a peripheral with monitoring and reconfiguration. The steps of method 510 may be accomplished with any lapse of time between steps and suitable portions of the method may be repeated to revise or cancel subscriptions no longer of interest. Prior to performing method 510, a system manager may configure a peripheral for being monitored or maintained by any user or other process. Initialization may include (a) defining access control codes for use with this peripheral; (b) defining roles for groups of users and the access control codes appropriate for each role; (c) assigning roles or access control codes to each user (e.g., by username, email address, etc. as discussed above) expected to be interested in subscribing to status from this peripheral; (d) defining aliases (e.g., mailing lists); (e) specifying the contents of various reports and the role or access control code prerequisites for reviewing each one; and (f) entering subscriptions for reports associated with managing the

peripheral, (e.g., notification of low consumable quantities directed to consumable suppliers; notification of hard error conditions directed to parts suppliers and service personnel; notification of network related emergency conditions to network service personnel; notification of network related busy conditions to network management personnel; and notification of media low and various environmental abnormalities to co-located site support). Initialization may be accomplished by network communication as discussed above. For example, the system manager may form one or more messages containing commands (e.g., CONFIG, SETACL, SETALIAS, APPOINT, PERMIT, and BATCH, as discussed above) and send these messages by email to the email address of the peripheral. (Col. 14, line 55 through Col. 15, line 30).

Thus, *Smith et al* merely discloses that prior to requesting a report, a system manager may configure a peripheral being monitored (column 15, lines 5-7). Nothing in *Smith et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Smith et al* merely discloses configuring a peripheral.

Additionally, *Smith et al* merely discloses initializing a peripheral. However, nothing in *Smith et al* shows, teaches or suggests that the peripheral is newly installed and the connection thereof must be checked as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Smith et al* merely discloses initializing a peripheral for being monitored.

Finally, *Smith et al* merely discloses monitoring a peripheral using email (column 2, lines 40-49). However, nothing in *Smith et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in advance of installing new equipment

management apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Smith et al* is merely directed to monitoring a peripheral using email.

L'Heureux et al appears to disclose a technique for processing diverse data within standard electronic mail (e-mail) messages. (Col. 1, lines 12-14) A desirable feature would be the ability to provide automatic updates to user equipment without the need for user intervention. (Col. 2, lines 59-61) Once in the proper format, the e-mail message may be transferred over standard e-mail networks using standard e-mail protocols. (Col. 3, lines 25-27) A method is provided for using standard e-mail messages to deliver diverse data types to a user. This allows automatic updates to a user's equipment using a standard e-mail message. (Col. 4, lines 33-39) Referring to FIG. 1, a high level block diagram 100 of a typical system used in conjunction with the method of the present invention is shown. An editing terminal 110, for example a desktop personal computer, is used to compose e-mail messages containing the diverse data that are the subject of the present invention. The message is sent, or uploaded, via the Internet 140, for example, by land lines 120, to an SMTP server 130. The SMTP server 130 relays the uploaded message to the recipient's POP server 160. Note that both the SMTP server 130 and the POP server 160 may be co-located or, as shown in the example in FIG. 1, may be remote from each other. (Col. 4, line 63 through Col. 5, line 7) An e-mail recipient requests their e-mail from the POP server 160 through a remote client device, in this example a Desktop E-mail Terminal [DET] 150. Upon receiving the request for service, the POP server 160 transfers, or downloads the e-mail message to the DET 150. (Col. 5, lines 13-17)

Thus, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses automatic updates to user's equipment using standard e-mail messages. Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in advance of installing new equipment management apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses automatically updating equipment using standard email messages.

Also, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses transmitting an email message using standard protocols. (Col. 3, lines 25-27) Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a central management apparatus comprising a transmission controller for transmitting to a data processor packet data in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus which acquires management information from equipment as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses transferring an email message over standard email networks.

Furthermore, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses embedding diverse data types in electronic mail messages. (Col. 4, lines 33-34) Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment and b) an equipment management apparatus which starts equipment management as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *L'Heureux et al* is merely directed to a data formatting method for embedding diverse data types in electronic mail messages.

Since neither *Smith et al* nor *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in advance of installing new equipment management apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11, applicant respectfully requests Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 2-3, 6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 depend from claims 1 and 11 and recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-3, 6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over *Smith et al* and *L'Heureux et al* at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 2-3, 6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 4-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Smith et al* and *L'Heureux et al* and further in view of *Frantz* (U.S. Patent No. 6,003,070).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action and for reasons which will be set forth below, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims and allows the claims to issue.

As discussed above, since nothing in the combination of the primary references to *Smith et al* and *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests the primary features as claimed in claim 1, applicant respectfully submits that the combination of the primary references with the secondary reference to *Frantz* would not overcome the deficiencies of the primary references. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 4-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 7-8 and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Smith et al* and *L'Heureux et al* and further in view of *Motoyama et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,581,092) and applicant's admitted prior art.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and for reasons which will be set forth below, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims and allows the claims to issue.

As discussed above, nothing in *Smith et al* or *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus as claimed in claim 14.

Additionally, nothing in *Smith et al* and *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment, b) a central management apparatus centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, c) registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed at the central management apparatus and d) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14.

Motoyama et al appears to disclose processing performed within a computer in order to process and forward the appropriate information from the network resource to the end user. (Col. 2, lines 14-16) A feature is the use of a connectionless-mode of communication (e.g., Internet e-mail) or transmission between a machine and a computer for monitoring, diagnosing and controlling the machine, and transmitting information regarding resource usage to an end user. Alternatively, the e-mail which is transmitted may be implemented using a connection mode of communication. The IBM Dictionary of Computing by George

McDaniel, 1994, defines a connectionless-mode transmission to be the transmission of a single unit of data from a source service access point to one or more destination service access points without establishing a connection. The IBM Dictionary also defines a connection-mode transmission to be the transmission of units of data from a source service access point to one or more destination service access points via a connection. The connection is established prior to data transfer and released following data transfer. (Col. 6, lines 46-62) FIG. 15 illustrates a process performed within the machine which determines whether a connection-mode or an e-mail-mode of communication is needed. After starting, step 770 determines if an event requires communication and if it does not, flow returns to the calling process. If communication is needed, step 772 determines whether the event requires an e-mail-mode or a connection-mode of transmission. Any type of high priority event for which immediate attention is needed or which the remote monitoring device would be interested in on an expedited basis is sent in a connection-mode of communication. This may be used when a hazardous connection exists within the machine or when something in the machine needs immediate attention. For example, if a thermistor in the fuser unit senses a high and unsafe temperature, a direct connection mode may be used. However, the transmission of a weekly or monthly report indicating the usage and a normal condition state in the machine can use the slower e-mail-mode of communication. Additionally, when the e-mail-mode of communication is not properly functioning, the connection-mode of communication is used. For example, if an Internet e-mail message is not properly received by the monitoring device, a direct connection-mode of communication is used. The e-mail message may contain a request for acknowledgment of receipt and if an

acknowledgment is not received within a predetermined time (e.g. 3-24 hours) then a connection-mode communication is used to re-transmit the message. Also, if a connection-mode of communication is not properly functioning, then the e-mail-mode of communication may be used. If step 772 determines that an event does not require an e-mail-mode of communication, step 776 determines if the direct communication channel is ready. For example, it determines if network, the telephone or ISDN line is available. If it is, a direct communication process is performed in step 778 to transmit the appropriate information. If the direct channel is not ready, step 780 notifies the user through the operation panel that there is a problem with the device. If step 772 determines that the event requires an e-mail-mode of transmission, step 774 calls an e-mail communication process. The process of FIG. 15 then returns to the calling process. FIG. 16 is a flowchart illustrating the processing performed when a non-urgent message is sent from a device. After starting, step 800 stores the information which needs to be transmitted in dynamic state storage. Step 802 determines whether it is time to send the data. When step 802 determines that it is not time to send the data, control passes to step 800, which was discussed previously. When step 802 determines that it is time to send data, step 804 packages the information according to the set format, and step 806 sends out the e-mail with the packaged information to its predetermined destination. The process of FIG. 16 then returns to the calling process. (Col. 16, line 46 through Col. 17, line 32)

Thus, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses using email for monitoring, diagnostics and controlling a machine. Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests

transmitting connection check data as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses using email for monitoring, diagnostics and control.

Also, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining whether a connection mode or an email mode of communication is needed. (Col. 16, lines 46-48) Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests registering information concerning an apparatus to be newly installed at a central management apparatus as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining whether a connection mode or an email mode of communication is needed (based upon the priority with a lower priority using a slower e-mail mode).

Additionally, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses using a connection mode or email mode based upon priority. (Col. 16, lines 53-64) Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) determining whether a communication system between a newly installed apparatus and a central management apparatus is a first communication system or a second communication system, b) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment, c) a central management apparatus centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, and d) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining the type of communication system needed based upon priority.

Applicant's admitted prior art appears to disclose that an equipment management system transmits equipment management information acquired by an equipment management apparatus to a central management center via a

communication line, and the central management center centrally manages a plurality of equipment. In such an equipment management system, in the case where an equipment management apparatus for integrally managing a plurality of equipment is newly installed, it is first checked whether or not connection between the newly installed equipment management apparatus and the central management center is properly made. In an equipment management system utilizing a public telephone circuit (real time communication means) which has been widely employed conventionally, in general, an equipment management apparatus transmits connection check data for making connection check to a central management center, whereby connection check is made. Namely, when a newly installed equipment management apparatus is activated, whereby connection check data can be normally transmitted to the central management center, it is possible to check that the equipment management apparatus is normally connected to the central management center. Thus, the reason why the equipment management apparatus transmits connection check data is that the equipment management apparatus is often connected to a telephone identical to that of another communication terminal such as facsimile machine, and does not have a specific telephone number. (Page 1, line 17 through Page 2, line 19)

Thus, applicant's admitted prior art merely discloses newly installed equipment management apparatus performs a normal transmission of connection check data to a central management center. Nothing in applicant's admitted prior art shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data without receiving initial transmission data as claimed in claim 14.

Also, applicant's admitted prior art merely discloses that newly installed equipment management apparatus is activated and performs a normal transmission of connection check data to a central management center. Nothing in applicant's admitted prior art shows, teaches or suggests a) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed, b) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment, c) a central management apparatus centrally managing information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, and d) registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14.

Since nothing in the combination of the prior art shows, teaches or suggests the primary features as claimed in claim 14, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 7-8 and 15-16 depend from claims 1 and 14 and recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 7-8 and 15-16 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over the references at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 1-6, 9-13 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Kraslavsky et al* (U.S. Patent No. 5,537,626) in view of *L'Heureux et al.*

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and for

reasons which will be set forth below, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims and allows the claims to issue.

Kraslavsky et al appears to disclose a method and apparatus, in an interactive network board, for providing a bi-directional interface between a local area network and a peripheral. (Col. 1, lines 20-23) A bi-directional interface is provided between the local area network and the peripheral so that large quantities of specific peripheral status information (and other information) may be exported from the peripheral to the local area network, and so that control information may be transferred from the local area network to the peripheral. (Col 2, lines 10-16) In its basic configuration, the NEB 2 contains NetWare.RTM.-compatible application modules comprising embedded versions of two configurations: the Customized Remote Printer ("CRPRINTER"); and the Customized Print Server ("CPSERVER"). Preferably, the NEB acts in only one of these configurations at a time. Further, these application modules require that a network protocol stack be loaded and functioning within the NEB. When configured with RPRINTER functionality, the NEB operates its printer as a slave to an external print server using a CRPRINTER module. In this configuration, the NEB exports to the LAN only limited printer status information in emulation of what the standard Novell print server expects from a standard Novell RPRINTER. However, extended status information about the printer will still be available if the CPCCONSOL utility (discussed above) is executed in the network administrator's PC 14. The customized NEB-embedded software which permits peripheral status and control information over the LAN is CPSOCKET. CPSOCKET will maintain a table of default settings for the device environment, download basic configuration information (fonts and emulations) at power-up, provide device

information, statistics, and log information for CPCONSOL displays, and provide reset, reboot, and download capabilities. CPSOCKET will also be responsible for the configuration of the NEB 2. Further, CPSOCKET will configure and activate applications on the NEB at the request of CPINIT. CPSOCKET also insures that the correct protocol stacks are available for each configured application. CPSOCKET will handle the settings of the NEB 2 and the printer variables at the request of both CPINIT and CPCONSOL. Finally, the download facility (e.g. the network administrator's PC 14) will contact CPSOCKET to carry out any firmware downloading, such as flashing EPROM 222, that is required. (Col. 13, line 29 through Col. 14, line 4) The basic configuration information comprises NEB environment settings (including which print server applications are active), as well as device environment options (e.g. a list of fonts and emulations to download printer initialization time), and device default settings (such as the internal device time/date/time zone, buffer size, disk and logging information, and printer name). The CPINIT program also displays status information about the NEB (such as the firmware level loaded in the NEB and reports latent POST errors). FIG. 14 is a flow diagram showing how a network administrator can use CPINIT from PC 14 to initialize and to configure, and later to reconfigure, both NEB 2 and printer 4 in which the NEB resides. (Col. 15, lines 33-42)

Thus, *Kraslavsky et al* merely discloses software which permits peripheral status and control information over a local area network including a table of default settings. (Col. 2, lines 10-16, Col. 13, line 56 through Col. 14, line 4) Nothing in *Kraslavsky et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in

advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Kraslavsky et al* merely discloses a table of default data.

As discussed above, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses allowing automatic updates using standard e-mail messages. Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data in advance of installing an apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11.

Also, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses transmitting an email message using standard protocols. (Col. 3, lines 25-27) Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a central management apparatus comprising a transmission controller for transmitting to a data processor packet data in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus which acquires management information from equipment as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses transferring an email message over standard email networks.

Furthermore, *L'Heureux et al* merely discloses embedding diverse data types in electronic mail messages. (Col. 4, lines 33-34) Nothing in *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment and b) an equipment management apparatus which starts equipment management as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *L'Heureux et al* is merely directed to a data formatting method for embedding diverse data types in electronic mail messages.

Since neither *Kraslavsky et al* nor *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests the primary features as claimed in claims 1 and 11, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 2-6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 depend from claims 1 and 11 and recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over *Kraslavsky et al* and *L'Heureux et al* at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 2-6, 9-10, 12-13 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 7-8 and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Kraslavsky et al* and *L'Heureux et al* and further in view of *Motoyama et al* and applicant's admitted prior art.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and for reasons which will be set forth below, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims and allows the claims to issue.

As discussed above, nothing in *Kraslavsky et al* and *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data and registering information concerning equipment to be newly installed at a central management apparatus as claimed in claim 14. Additionally, nothing in *Kraslavsky et al* and *L'Heureux et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) a central management apparatus centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, b) registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed at the central management apparatus and c) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14.

As discussed above, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses using email to monitor, diagnose or control a machine. Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting connection check data as claimed in claim 14. Rather, email is used for diagnostic purposes, monitoring and controlling a machine.

Also, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining whether a connection mode or an email mode of communication is needed. (Col. 16, lines 46-48) Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests registering information concerning an apparatus to be newly installed at a central management apparatus as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining whether a connection mode or an email mode of communication is needed (based upon the priority with a lower priority using a slower e-mail mode).

Additionally, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses using a connection mode or email mode based upon priority. (Col. 16, lines 53-64) Nothing in *Motoyama et al* shows, teaches or suggests a) determining whether a communication system between a newly installed apparatus and a central management apparatus is a first communication system or a second communication system, b) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment, c) a central management apparatus centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, and d) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Motoyama et al* merely discloses determining the type of communication system needed based upon priority.

As discussed above, applicant's admitted prior art merely discloses that newly installed equipment management apparatus is activated and performs a normal transmission of connection check data to a central management center. Nothing in applicant's admitted prior art shows, teaches or suggests a) transmitting connection check data without receiving initial transmission data, b) a first communication system in which a central management apparatus transmits connection check data without receiving initial transmission data from equipment to be newly installed, c) an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment, d) a central management apparatus centrally managing information making communication in accordance with a first or second communication system, and e) registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed as claimed in claim 14.

Since nothing in the combination of the prior art references shows, teaches or suggests the primary features as claimed in claim 14, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 7-8 and 15-16 recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 7-8 and 15-16 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over the references at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 7-8 and 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Thus it now appears that the application is in condition for reconsideration and allowance. Reconsideration and allowance at an early date are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact, by telephone, the applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed within the currently set shortened statutory period, applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such extension of time may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

In the event that any additional fees are due with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

Respectfully submitted,

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